

18

T H E
Assiento Contract
C O N S I D E R ' D.

A S A L S O,
The Advantages and Decay
O F T H E
Trade of *Jamaica* and the Plantations,
W I T H T H E
C A U S E S and C O N S E Q U E N C E S thereof.

In several L E T T E R S to a Member
of Parliament.

*The French have dealt with us as if they thought the
Genius of France had got a perfect Mastery over
the Genius of England, otherwise they would not
have so Imposed upon us in matters of this Nature;
which tho' our Court would not see, the People
must needs feel, and where the Legislature was cer-
tain to be Alarm'd, and at last to Interpose.*

Doct. Davenant.

L O N D O N,
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Corner.* 1714. (Price 6d.)

THE
P R E F A C E.

THESE Letters were occasionally wrote for the Information of a Gentleman in the present House of Commons, and are made publick at his Instance, to shew the great Concern the Plantations (especially the Island of *Jamaica*) are to *Great-Britain* to encourage and preserve, and to undeceive many People, who are carried away with a Notion of great Advantages, never before enjoy'd, accruing to this Kingdom, by erecting the *South-Sea Company*, and their Trading on the foot of the *Assiento* Contract.

If upon Perusal, any Person should think the Service of the Island in *Jamaica*, is the View and Intent of writing them, he is not much mistaken, for it must be confess'd the dismal Consequences, unavoidably falling upon that Island from the *Assiento* Contract, and the *French* being left with the share they have these late Years possess'd of *Hispaniola*, with the Liberty they now enjoy of Trading in the *South-Seas*, were the first Motive that occasion'd the mention of some things thereupon in Discourse, which afterwards were thought proper to be set in a fuller light, and explain'd by the following Letters, not altogether for the Advantage and Interest of *Jamaica*, but for the general Advantage and Interest of *Great-Britain*, by

The P R E F A C E.

preserving a very beneficial Trade we enjoy'd, in lieu of attempting one precarious in its Nature, a certain loss to its Undertakers, and ruinous to the most gainful Branches of our Trade; for should the *English* be dispossest'd of *Jamaica*, which they may soon be, if that Trade be ruin'd, however some People may believe, we shall not only lose an Island of very great Consequence to us in point of Trade, but must never afterwards expect to be formidable by our Naval Force, in that part of the World, as we have been for many Years past by means of that Island; for, as * *Dr. Davenant* has justly observ'd, ' The loss of *Jamaica* must probably be follow'd with the Ruin of our Interest in *America*.

In these Letters the Dangers arising to *Jamaica*, and other our Sugar Colonies, are shewn really to proceed from the Encrease of the *French* Power and Settlements in their Islands in *America*, especially on *Hispaniola*; and 'twere heartily to be wish'd, the Consequences thereof, to the Trade and Navigation of this Kingdom, were but more seriously attended to, and consider'd.

It has been long since remark'd, that the Breed of Seamen, with the Encrease and Encouragement of the Navigation of this Kingdom, does chiefly depend on our Plantation Trade, and *Newfoundland* Fishery; therefore their present State and Condition deserve the immediate Consideration of our best Patriots, for preventing the Decay, Loss, or Destruction of the Trade and Maritime Strength of *Great-Britain*.

The Merchants and Planters trading to, and residing in *Virginia* and *Maryland*, have laid their Case before the Parliament this present Sessions, wherein

* *His Discourse on Trade and publick Revenues.*

The P R E F A C E.

wherein they set forth, ' That the high Custom of
' Sixpence and one third of a Penny *per* Pound on
' Tobacco, for the home Consumption, has, by
' many Years Experience, been found much more
' than it can bear; the Planters and Merchants Ad-
' venturers, having often lost fifty *per Cent*, and
' sometimes more than their Capital, the Produce
' not being sufficient to defray the Custom, Freight,
' and other Charges, so that without some timely
' Relief, this Trade must inevitably be lost to *Great-*
' *Britain*.

' As the distance of our *British* Plantations is an
' Improvement of our Navigation, so of Necessity
' it becomes a Charge to our Tobacco, and has
' given great Encouragement to the Planting of
' vast Quantities of that Commodity in *Holland*,
' *Germany*, &c. to the Improvement of their Lands,
' and Benefit of their Proprietors, who supply
' many parts of *Europe*, to the Decay of our Plan-
' tations, Trade and Navigation.

' And unless such Encouragement be given to
' the Exporters of Tobacco, as may enable them
' to render it very cheap to foreign Markets, and
' thereby in great measure to prevent the Planting
' in *Europe*, this beneficial Trade will in a few
' Years be irretrievably lost, and our Nation oblig'd
' to pay Specie for Linen, and all other the Ma-
' nufactures of *Holland*, *Germany*, *Swedeland*, &c.
' that us'd to be purchas'd in those Parts, with the
' Proceed of our Plantation Tobacco.

' The Discouragements of late Years, have al-
' ready ruin'd several considerable Merchants,
' oblig'd others to decline trading in Tobacco,
' and forc'd many of the Planters in *Virginia* and
' *Maryland* upon Manufactures, wherein they are
' already such Proficients, that several Counties
' make Shoes, Stockins, Hats, Linen and Woollen,

The P R E F A C E.

not only for their own, but the use of their Neighbours; others sow Corn, which have been sent from the Plantations in great Quantities, to several parts of *Europe*; and Necessity will put them actually upon many Expedients, to become less dependant on this Kingdom.

And they thus conclude, ' The melancholy State of our Tobacco Plantation is such, that for several Years past, the Exports of our Woollen and other Manufactures to *Virginia* and *Maryland* are diminish'd at least one half, the Traders thereto greatly Impoverish'd, the Planters by Necessity falling into Manufactures, the Navigation of this Kingdom consequently lessen'd, and notwithstanding the several high Duties laid on Tobacco, the Revenue hath not been thereby augmented.

This is the melancholy State of the Tobacco Trade, and as it is presum'd the Danger of our losing the Sugar Trade, is in some measure shewn in these Letters; and the Danger of its Loss is so very apparent, that an Author quoted in these Letters has set it out in a full Light, altho' that Gentleman would infer the Cause of it to be different from what are here represented, but from the Dedication of his Book, and particular Sense, in distinguishing the present M——y for their Experience and Knowledge in Trade, it is fully evident, that his Book was rather calculated for a private, than the publick Interest.

But let us observe what his Country Man of *Barbadoes* says, in a Speech to the Council and general Assembly of that Island, as Printed in the *Post-Boy* the 24th Instant, ' Our Neighbour Colonies so long kept by Foreign Fears from Improving, are now encouraging Trade, encreasing their People, enlarging their Plantations, and cultivating their Lands; their Fertile Soil yields them many
Crops

The P R E F A C E.

‘ Crops from one Planting; ours requires the ut-
‘ most Art, Industry, and Manure, and that too
‘ annually.

And as to the *Newfoundland* Fishery, the Decrease thereof, and its Causes, have been shewn in many Pamphlets lately writ, but in none with more Clearness than the *British Merchant, or Commerce preserv'd*, particularly in the Papers No. 71. and 81. in the latter of which 'tis said ‘ the *French* are ‘ now so much our Rivals in this Trade, and are ‘ encreased to such a prodigious degree, that they ‘ employ yearly from *St. Malo, Glanville, Rochell, St. Martins, Isle of Robe, Bayonne, St. John de Luce, Sibour, &c.* to carry on their Fishery on ‘ the great Banks of *Newfoundland*, and on the ‘ Coasts of that Island, that is, in their wet and ‘ dry Fish, upwards of four hundred Sail of ‘ Ships.

‘ They are indeed (says he in another part of this ‘ Paper) to deliver us up the Possession of *Placentia*, ‘ and some other Place in *Newfoundland*; but then ‘ they have taken care to have a better Place yield- ‘ ed to them, in lieu thereof, with this extraordi- ‘ nary Favour to them, more than to us, that they ‘ have the Liberty granted them to frequent our ‘ Islands of *Newfoundland*, and erect Stages, &c. ‘ thereon for drying and curing their Fish, but ‘ we have not the Privilege allowed us of doing ‘ the same on any of their Islands, or on the Island ‘ of *Cape Breton*, which they have express Permis- ‘ sion granted them to fortifie as they please; thus ‘ they are our Rivals in the Fishery by our own ‘ Consent, which is the more wonderful, in that ‘ it is owing to this Fishery that they dared to con- ‘ tend for the Mastery at Sea with the Maritime ‘ Powers of *England* and *Holland* united; 'tis true, ‘ the *English* and *Dutch* are most frequently call'd ‘ the

The P R E F A C E.

the Maritime Powers, but if I were not afraid the *Mercator* would fall upon me for discovering our Weakness, I would beg you to tell him I think it a Jest to appropriate the Name of Maritime Powers to *Great Britain* and *Holland* exclusive of *France*, when we consider what a figure that Nation made at Sea before the Battle of *la Hogue* in 1692. Can we then think that a few Years of Peace, with such a Fishery, and such Conditions of Commerce as were granted to *France* by the late Treaty, will not soon enable her to contend again with our United Fleets?

The present State of our Tobacco and Sugar Trade, and *Newfoundland* Fishery being such as represented, must give us a very sad Prospect, since 'tis by our Sugar and Tobacco Colonies we have such a Ballance in Trade on our side with *Holland*, *Hamburgb*, &c. and from our *Newfoundland* Fishery, very great Sums have been Annually brought into this Kingdom from *Spain*, *Portugal* and *Italy*; for our other Colonies, as *New England*, *New York*, &c. being chiefly dependant on our Sugar Settlements to take off their Product, and having not wherewithal to answer the Exports to them from *Great Britain*, are only valuable as they bear relation to such Colonies as are furnished by them, which must cease on the decay of the Trade from whence it arises.

Thus sad and melancholy is our present Condition as to these Branches of our Trade and Navigation; for confirming of which, and several other Matters in the following Letters concerning our Trade in the *West Indies*, exclusive of the present designed one, upon the Foot of the *Assiento* Contract, shall conclude with an Extract of a Letter from a Person who has lived in *Cadiz* and *Jamaica* for above twenty Years past.

Extract

The P R E F A C E.

Extract of a Letter from *Jamaica* dated the 13th
of *April*, 1714.

THUS you see how they (the French) endeavour to streighren all Trade in general, and giving such Tracks of Land (on Hispaniola) and not letting any one enjoy more than what he Plants and Manures, they'll become in few Years very powerful; nay, they don't stick to say, but in less than ten Years they will have the whole Island of Hispaniola.

Did Spain but clear their Eyes as they ought, a War by them should be immediately commenced, or else the Spaniards are gone in these Parts; and upon the first Quarrel we ever have with them (the French) this Island the next. For as the French are endeavouring to settle and bring a Number of Men among them, our Gentry are for sending all away; this is the Cunning of our Inhabitants.

I can't help remarking to you the little Notice England takes in protecting its Trade: Did they but consider the Game France has been playing these seven Years past, none but Men void of Natural Thought would have suffered the Continuance thereof since the Cessation of Arms, from that time we might have prevented it, if it could not before; but our great Sufferings will be from what has been done since, and no body trouble themselves about it; it's their being suffered to send Ships upon Ships into the South Seas, and supplying the Kingdoms of Peru and Mexico with such quantities of Goods that 'twill be seven Years to consume them; by which Scheme they have anticipated the Trade of our Nation, Holland, and the Kingdom of Old Spain for five Years; for I can assure you it will be at least that time before any quantity of Goods of general Species can be in Demand, or give Encouragement to any Trader of Spanish, English and Dutch

The P R E F A C E.

Dutch Nation to send Goods to the Kingdoms of Peru or Mexico, for why should any one think those People so foolish to buy together ten suits of Cloaths, when one will serve them? Thus it's with them, whatever Goods come must lie till those in the Country are consumed; it's this vast supply of Goods by the South Seas to the Kingdoms of Peru and Mexico, that has kept all the silver and Gold from coming into the North, and occasioned the Total Ruin of Old Spain, and more particularly their Navigation, and utterly destroyed for the present those Cities, and the Settlements on the North side: Nay, they will not let us alone in the East-Indies, for I can assure you three of their Ships have took in Momy, and went to China, and so returned to Lima and other places with rich India Cargoes.

Thus they attack our Trade in all its Parts, and when have glutted every Branch, and sucked the Marrow of Trade to procure a Peace, feed us with the Notion of giving us a South Sea Company, without letting us know the Advantages of such a Trade now brought to as low an Ebb as ever any Trade was brought to, having near Twenty two Sail of Ships six Months since in the South Seas.

If this is not speedily remedied I fear a worse Consequence, therefore it behoves all Europe to engage in it; I have ventured to write thus to you, and to let you see what little Advantages the South Sea Company can expect from their Trade.

T H E

Assiento Contract Considered.

A S A L S O,

*The Advantages and Decay of the Trade of
Jamaica, and the Plantations, with the
Causes and Consequences thereof.*

In several *Letters* to a Member of Parliament.

S I R,

January 20, 1712-13.

I Shall give you the best Information I can, in the time you allow me for it, of the Advantage the Island of *Jamaica* is to *Great Britain*, both as to its Situation for Trade with the *Spaniards*; or, in case of a War with them, as well as the Value it produceth, and its being made capable of producing Yearly; and also my Apprehension, that it will not be long of any Consequence to *Great Britain*, either in regard to the Trade with the *Spaniards*, or its own Produce, and the Danger we are in of losing it whenever there is another War with *France*.

And first, *Jamaica* is situated in the Latitude of 17 and 18, and hath for its Neighbours, *viz.* 35 Leagues to the Eastward and Windward the Island of *Hispaniola*; about 25 Leagues to the Northward the Island of *Cuba*; and about 150 Leagues to the Southward is the Main of *New*

B

Spain,

Spain, or the North side of the Kingdom of *Peru*, whereupon are *Cartagene* and *Portobello*, the Port that the Galleons come to; and about 350 Leagues to the Westward and Leeward is *la Vera Cruz*, which is the Port or chief Place for Trade with the Kingdom of *Mexico* on that side, as the above Places are for the Kingdom of *Peru*.

The Trade with the *Spaniards* from *Jamaica* (tho' Collusive) has been very considerable; and 'tis certain for seven Years past (about which time it commenced *de Novo*) the *Spaniards* have been supplied from thence, one Year with another, with three or four thousand Negroes; in return for which, and for Flower, Woollen and other Goods, there has been received of them in Gold and Silver, and the Produce of *New Spain*, 200000 *l.* or 250000 *l.* Yearly; and as the Produce of the Island it self for some Years past has not been less in Value than 500000 *l.* a Year; so 'tis capable of producing three times what it does at present, were but some Laws made to prevent such Quantities of Land being Monopolized by particular Persons, and obliging such Persons, as have very great Runns of Land, and will neither settle nor sell the same, that they do the one or the other, and to give Encouragement for white People to come and reside in the Island.

As to the Trade from *Jamaica* with the *Spaniards*, I fear from the Power the *French King* has over King *Philip*, and the growing as well as the present Strength of the *French*; as also the Encouragement they have given them by King *Philip* in those Parts, it must be soon at an end. 'Tis probable *Great Britain* may have the *Assiento*, or the supplying the *Spaniards* with Negroes, if there can be found any Persons, incorporated or
not,

not, so inconsiderate, as to accept it on the Terms her Majesty has acquainted her Parliament.

'Tis not much more than Thirty Years, that the only Settlement the *French* were possessed of in the *West Indies* was *Martineco*, since this they have settled *Guardalupe*, and increased their Settlements on *Hispaniola* ten to one; and as they have so increased them during two Wars, what may it not be presum'd they will do on a Peace, and the Encouragement they have given them for it, by the Duty laid upon all clay'd or refin'd Sugar imported into *France*, which Duty effectually prohibits, or prevents either us or the *Dutch* (who have vast Quantities from *England* Yearly) from sending any thither, and must consequently cause a present Encouragement to, and Increase of the *French* Plantations; and as they have within these four or five Years beat us almost out of our Indigo Trade, so it can't be a much longer time before our Condition will be the same with our Sugar Trade.

In 1709 and 1710, the then Ministry had it motion'd to, and it was intended by them, that at the General Treaty of Peace it should be demanded for the *French* to restore to the *Spaniards* such part as they possessed of the Island of *Hispaniola*; but instead of that there are good Reasons to believe, that the *French* are confirmed in their Possession by the Cession of the whole Island granted by King *Philip* to his Grandfather.

As it is very much to be feared, from what I have said, that the Plantations in general will suffer, and be of little Consequence to *Great Britain* in a few Years, so the Island of *Jamaica*, of such Concern to it in regard to its Situation or Nearness to *New Spain*, cannot whenever we have a Rupture with *France*, without a vast Charge, as well as great Foresight,

fight, remain long in the Hands or Possession of the Subjects of it, since in twenty four Hours Sail the *French* from any part of *Hispaniola* can be upon it; 'tis needless to say more, as to the Danger *Jamaica* is in: then observe, that in the Year 1693 the Inhabitants of *Hispaniola* form'd an Expedition at their own Charge against it, and over-run and destroyed the greatest part of it, though it must be own'd that the Year before the Island had suffered a very great Loss by the Earthquake in its Inhabitants, and the Sickness that followed; yet notwithstanding on enquiring into the State and Condition of the Island at that time, 'twill be found to have had a much greater Number of White Men, or Inhabitants upon it, than since; and it is certain, and must be lamented, that at this present the Number of them is less than they have been for 40 Years past.

The Collectors Demand of Duties on Prize Goods brought into the Island occasioned several thousand Sea-faring Men to leave it about three Years ago; and the Proceedings of the Admiral or Commander in Chief in those Parts has also induc'd considerable Numbers to do the same, and have in many Respects been of very great Prejudice to the Trade and Interest of the Island.

Now as the other Islands belonging to *Great Britain* in the *West Indies* have little or no Trade, so 'tis their Produce only makes them valuable; but the Island of *Jamaica* is not only valuable for its Produce, but also for its Situation for Trade with the *Spaniards*; and in Case of a War to obstruct or annoy with the Queens Ships or Privateers from thence, not only the *French* Trade to and from *Hispaniola*, but theirs, the *Spaniards*, or any other Nations Trade with *New Spain* on the North side.

'Tis

'Tis necessary to observe, to make good more fully what I premised in the beginning, that all Ships or Vessels bound to *Jamaica* from any part of *Europe*, *Africa* or *America*, make the Island of *Hispaniola*, and come down on the South side of it, and that all Ships or Vessels in their return from *Jamaica* to *Great Britain*, or any other part, either turn up (after clear of the East end of it) on the North side of *Hispaniola*, and South side of *Cuba*, or take their Passage through the Golph of *Florida*, and pass by, and generally go in sight of the *Havana* on *Cuba*, which is just at the opening of the said Golph; and as Monsieur *Crofat* has by his late Grant from the *French King*, plainly *Florida* included and comprehended, so 'tis most certain, that whoever are in Possession of such an Extent of Land as seems granted him, will be Master of the Canal of *Bahama*, and so Neighbouring to the Island of *Cuba*, that it will not be difficult to hinder the Passage of any Ships or Vessels that way, as well as it will not from *Hispaniola*, to hinder them either coming or going to *Jamaica*, or returning from thence the other Passage above-mentioned.

I should proceed, but that I fear I have already tired you, and that you will repent you gave me the Invitation: However, I hope what I have said is enough for you to infer Consequences, and that it will occasion you and other Gentlemen to prevent them whatever you can.

I am,

S I R, &c.

S I R,

April 20, 1713,

HAVING in a former Letter given you my Thoughts both of the Advantage and Consequence of the Island *Jamaica* to *Great-Britain*, as well as the Danger we are in of losing it whenever we have another War with *France*, and now taking the *Assiento*, or Contract, of allowing the Subjects of *Great-Britain* the liberty of importing Negroes into the *Spanish West-Indies* on the Foot thereof, to be very Disadvantageous to the said Island, I shall give you my Thoughts thereupon, and show, that the said Contract will prove a Loss even to them who shall accept it.

As I have before acquainted you, that the private Trade from *Jamaica* to the Coast of *New Spain*, has been very considerable, and brought more Money into her Majesty's Dominions in a Year, than the Contract can, admitting the 4800 Negroes, or more, should be taken off yearly by the *Spaniards*, so 'tis to be feared, that this Contract will soon put an end to the said Trade; and that by it numbers of Merchants, or Factors, and Sea-faring Men, will be prevented going to *Jamaica*, as well as many now Inhabitants of and belonging to the Island, will be obliged to leave it; and that as much less of the Manufactures of *Great-Britain*, &c. and Provisions from *Ireland* will be sent to the Island; so the quantity of Shipping that went yearly to it, will consequently lessen and fall short; whereby the Planter that can't Ship the Produce of his Plantation to *Great-Britain*, will be under a Necessity to sell it at a much lower Price, and he that can Ship it, must give a much higher Freight. That these and many more will be the Consequences to *Jamaica* from this

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Contract is undeniable, unless those, who 'tis said are to have it, will not make use of the Power with the Government, &c. (stipulated in the said Contract, to prevent the Subjects of *Great-Britain*, and the Plantations, from importing Negroes, under Penalty of Forfeiture) or by their Agents, (as 'tis to be feared 'twill be in their Power) obstruct or hinder the Trade they may or can otherwise have for Merchandize with the *Spaniards*

That the Contract for supplying the *Spaniards* with Negroes, has prov'd a loss to former *Assentists*, has been acknowledg'd by the Contractors themselves; but to make that good, we have this Contract in the 4th Article, where 'tis stipulated, ' That considering the Losses which former *Assentists* have sustained, the King has been pleas'd to allow to the Company of this *Assentists* a Ship of 500 Tuns to Trade withal yearly to the *West-Indies*, during the 30 Years of this Contract, on condition they shall not attempt any unlawful Trade. But surely this Permission is not look'd upon, or esteem'd by any Person that has consider'd the Country, &c. where the Goods are to be sent, and the uncertainty of there being sold, to be any Advantage to the *Assentists*.

But on the contrary, a certain Loss to them, for by the said Article 'tis stipulated, ' That the Goods shall lye in Warehouses 'till the Arrival of the Flota's and Galleons, and be sold only at the time of the Fair,' which is generally but once in three Years, and sometimes longer.

We are told in the Preamble to this Contract, that it was given to her Majesty, in Condescension and Complacency to her, as the Draught was put into King *Philip's* Hands by Don *Manuel Menasse Gilligan*, at which I am not a little surpriz'd, since by the said Contract I will take upon me to

say (tho' by the Reservation to King *Philip* in the 4th Article, as well as in the Hints, as to the Repayment of the 200000 pieces of Eight to be advanced him in other Articles, it be taken for granted, it will be a very profitable thing for the *Assentists*, and has been given out and asserted in several Addresses to her Majesty, to be of very great Benefit and Consideration to *Great-Britain*) that not any Body of her Majesty's Subjects will be Gainers, or the Kingdom have any new Advantage, or Supply of Money accrue to Her thereby.

I must confess, I think all that the Persons to whom the settling of a Contract was left to, had to have advised, was for us to require and demand of King *Philip*, (which surely he would have agreed to in Condescension and Complacency to our giving him *Spain* and the *Indies*.)

That the *British* Nation should have been the only Nation or People that should have supplied the *Spanish West-Indies* with Negroes, and have liberty of doing it at what Ports and Places, and in such number as they should think fit, paying the Duties required; hereby many Inconveniences, as to Rules, Restrictions, and being liable on every occasion to an Arbitrary Power in so distant a Country, as well as a Partnership with a King, &c. would have been avoided, and no Subject of *Great-Britain*, or the Plantations, excluded this Trade, and consequently the said Trade enlarged, and more diffusive among her Majesty's Subjects, as well as of more Advantage to *Great-Britain*.

Now on the Foot of this Contract, as the *Assentists* are to have Princes for their Parties, they are to advance in consideration of having half of the Profits (if any be made) of the said Trade, to King *Philip* about 50000 *l.* to be repaid at the Expiration of the Contract, but no Provision is made how

or in what manner, as also his Share for the carrying on of the said Trade. Besides, the *Affientists* are, from *March 1712*, to pay yearly the Duties of 33 pieces of Eight, and one third on 4000 Negroes at *Madrid*. The whole on these several Heads will amount to a considerable Sum of Money; and may it not justly be feared that the *Spaniards*, since 'tis no settled Price they are to give by the Contract, will often delay buying, in order to fall the Price; and that in the several hundred of Negroes that may be brought at one Shipping, or in one short time, they will take only such as are upon Examination the Choice of the Number; and further, 'tis a hardship upon the *Affientists* to pay Custom annually for such a number of Negroes, tho' they do not find it for their Interest to send or import them; or they are not able in the Course of the Trade to do it; as a much greater hardship to pay the Duties in 15 Days after the Arrival of the Negroes on the Coast of *New Spain*, when many may dye before they are or can be sold, especially considering what Numbers must be sickly if the Voyage be long.

In my Opinion, as this Contract bears hard upon the *Affientists*, so it seems calculated to prohibit all our other Trade with the *Spaniards* in the *West-Indies*, but on the footing thereof, or in the manner therein prescribed, and to hinder many useful Discoveries in point of enlarging our Trade, as also to be an effectual Bar to the Settlements and Commerce of the *South-Sea* Company into the *South-Seas*; from which, ever since the present Lord Treasurer's opening the Project in Parliament for paying the publick Debts, we have been told and made to believe (as by several Addresses to the Queen may be seen) such wonderful Advantages, as to Trade, would accrue to the Kingdom.

That

That we are thus frustrated of the Settlements we were encouraged to expect from the *Spanish* Dominions in the *Indies*, as well as in our Trade thither, I take to be very hard, and an indifferent Compensation for the Favour we have done the House of *Bourbon*, in not continuing the War with our Allies, when 'twas certainly in our Power; with them, to have recovered the whole *Spanish* Monarchy out of their Hands, and to have had the Trade of the *Spanish West-Indies* to our selves, by obliging the *French* to have stipulated, as in the Preliminary in 1709. that to wit, *particularly and especially France shall never become possessed of the Spanish West-Indies, nor send Ships thither to exercise Commerce under any Pretext whatsoever.*

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

S I R,

Nov. 10, 1713.

IN Answer to yours of the 2d Instant, I assure you my Apprehensions and Thoughts continue the same, and I am the more confirm'd in them by what has occurred to me since; I am truly concern'd to hear that some Managers of the *South-Sea* Company advise and declare themselves so warmly for the Prevention and Ruin of the private Trade carried on from the Island of *Jamaica* in the *West-Indies*, with the *Spaniards* on the *North* Coast of *New Spain*; I heartily wish these Gentlemen, or the *Assentists*, (which is a thing to be feared) do not by their powerful Interest find means of doing it, since 'tis so necessary for the Interest of them; however fatal to the Interest of *Jamaica*, as well as of *Great-Britain*, *Ireland*, and the Northern Colonies of *America*.

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It highly deserves the Consideration of all her Majesty's Subjects, and especially the Lords of Trade and Plantations, (whose Places should give them the occasion of acquainting themselves with its true Interest,) of what Consequence the Encouragement and Preservation the Island of *Jamaica* is to *Great-Britain*, &c. and the Danger there will be of its falling into the Hands of the *French* upon a Rupture with that Nation, (more especially if the Trade above-mentioned be ruined, which will greatly diminish its Strength of People) or from the Force of its Neighbours on *Hispaniola*; an Island, besides its largeness to any of the *French* or *English* ones in those Parts, already formidable, and daily increasing in People and in new Settlements.

Besides what I have already taken notice to you, of what Concern this Island is to *Great-Britain*, in respect to its Situation, yearly Produce in Sugar, Indigo, &c. and the Money brought into her Majesty's Dominions annually by their Trade from thence (tho' Collusive) with the *Spaniards*: 'Tis also of Concern to it, not only as it gives Encouragement by its Trade to *New Spain*, to the Navigation and Produce of our Northern Colonies; particularly *New York* and *Pensilvania*, but as that Trade finds Employment for a great number of Vessels and Sea-faring Men at and from that Island, wherein consists the best Strength of it.

Shall then the Interest and Prosperity of so valuable, beneficial, and even necessary an Island to *Great-Britain*, and other her Majesty's Dominions, have no regard shewn to it? And shall a certain advantageous Trade to the Subjects of *Great-Britain* have an End put to it, to make room for an uncertain one, and one Disadvantageous to the Undertakers; for 'tis not to be denied, but the
private

private Trade above-mentioned, has brought more Trade into her Majesty's Dominions for many Years past, than can be brought into them on the foot of the *Affiento* Contract: And that also such Trade has been more profitable to the private Traders or Merchants, than the said Contract will be to the *South-Sea* Company or *Affientists*. But this I must own, that the Treasury of *Spain* will be advanced by the Trading on the foot of the Contract, more than by the private Trade, which perhaps is the true Reason for the Warmth of some Men for its being destroyed.

Now considering this, and that by the *Affiento* Contract the *South-Sea* Company, or *Affientists*, are not to Trade into the *South-Seas*, or in any other manner to *New Spain*, than by the said Contract prescribed; where then are the great things (we have been told of) obtained for *Great-Britain* in respect to its Trade to *New Spain*, and by erecting the *South-Sea* Company? Or how have the Nation's Debts been paid without one penny Charge to the People, when nothing is more notorious than that since the erecting the *South-Sea* Company, there has been raised by Parliament, the Sum of 500000*l.* yearly for the Interest of their Debt; and that there are Funds charged (which 'till 1716. are appropriated to other uses) to raise and pay the Interest of their Debt to Perpetuity, or 'till the Nation finds means of paying it off.

Surely had any such Advantages accrued to the Nation, either from the erecting of the *South-Sea* Company, or the *Affiento* Contract, or the late Peace, every body would have felt and readily acknowledged the Benefit of them, and been able to have pointed out to any Objectors, the Particulars gained in Trade, unenjoyed before by the Subjects of *Great-Britain*.

As I have formerly hinted to you, I wish due Reflection was made by every Subject of *Great-Britain*, on the sending Goods in the manner preſcrib'd in the 42d Article of the *Aſſiento* Contract: This I muſt confeſs will be a new Method of Trading to *New Spain*, but I deny its being any new Advantage in point of Trade to the Subjects of *Great-Britain*; 'tis only taking from the Trade we had before the laſt War, and might (as 'tis ſaid we have Peace with *Spain*, and the Trade on the footing we had it in the Reign of King *Charles* the 11d.) expect again to and from *Cadiz*, *Port St. Mary*, &c. 'Tis well if this manner of Trading, as by the ſaid 42d Article preſcribed, do not (which 'tis my ſettled Opinion it will) prove a Diſcouragement to, and leſſening of the Exportation of the Manufactures, and conſequently the Trade of this Kingdom, on the general Ballance with the *Spaniſh* Nation.

For as this manner of Trade will certainly leſſen the number of *Britiſh* Gentlemen from going or living as formerly, or otherwiſe as Factors in *Cadiz*, *Port St. Maries*, &c. (whoſe Friends or Acquaintances when there wou'd keep them more or leſs employ'd) ſo thoſe Places were the Mart of our Manufactures for the *Indies*, and there the Traders or Merchants who embarked on the Galleons and Flota's, inform'd themſelves what Species and Quantities were bought up and Ship'd from time to time; or 'twere generally encouraging for them, ſeverally to buy or take with them upon each Fleet; which they muſt be at a loſs in, if the *South-Sea* Company or *Aſſiento*iſts do Trade according to the manner preſcribed in the 42d Article of the *Aſſiento* Contract afore-mentioned; and as the Dealing upon ſuch Uncertainties will prevent our Merchants from ſending the quantities of our Manufactures (as formerly, and ſome People have the aſſurance to expect

pect now) to *Cadix*, Port *St. Maries*, &c. so 'twill prevent the Trader or Merchants that Embark on the Galleons and Flota's (as may be probably conjectur'd) from buying any of the small Quantities of *British* Manufactures sent to those Places by our Merchants, or from their taking any of our Manufactures with them to sell on our Merchants Accounts, as has been formerly practis'd, and be the means of turning the former manner of Trade, and occasion those Traders and Merchants to *New Spain* to buy the Goods of, and be concerned in this Trade with other Nations; consider, I pray, the Consequences of this to *Great-Britain*.

I must freely confess to you, that to me it will seem to be very impolitick (were it no Disadvantage in general, as evidently it must be to her Majesty's Dominions) for *Great-Britain*, either by a Law, to put a stop to, or otherwise Discourteance or Discourage the Subjects of it from Trading in what manner they can with any Nation or People, where 'tis their Interest, and an Advantage to this Kingdom they should; as plainly in this Case.

It may be shown, (if any are so weak as to question it) that every Kingdom, or State, that have Colonies and Plantations abroad, and under their severall immediate Governments, act in the same manner as the Kingdom of *Old Spain* doth in respect to any other Kingdoms or States Subjects trading to *New Spain*; and do not permit any of the Subjects of such other Kingdom or State to trade to such their Colonies and Plantations; And whoever does Trade to them, and not Subjects of, and come not from the Dominions of the Government they are severally under, the Ship and Goods are liable to a Forfeiture by the Laws, Customs, &c. of each Country, should they be seized.

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And therefore those Persons that Trade, do it collusively, and are constantly upon their Guard; but tho' each particular Kingdom and State have Laws, Customs, &c. to prevent the Subjects of others from Trading to their Colonies and Plantations, yet no one Kingdom or State have any Laws, Customs, &c. to prevent or restrain its own Subjects from Trading to the Colonies or Plantations of any other Kingdom or State; surely then we shall consider well before we do a thing so much against the Interest of the Trading Subjects of her Majesty's Dominions, and the general Advantage of the Kingdom, and not exclude our selves, and leave this Beneficial method and way of Trade to be carried on and enjoyed by the *French, Dutch,* and other Nations, of every one of whom, by our Situation, we have certainly a very great Advantage in carrying on the said Trade.

I heartily wish my Apprehensions, which arise from the certain Declaration of some Men who are looked upon as great Managers in the Article of the Trade of the Nation, may have no Foundation, and that no Law be Enacted, or Orders given, or Power interfere, to prevent or discourage the Subjects of *Great-Britain* or the Plantations, from Trading as usual with the *Spaniards*. And also, that not any Assistance (with our Men of War or otherwise) be given by the Government to the *South-Sea* Company, or *Assentists*, for the seizing of any Ship or Vessel belonging to the Subjects of *Great-Britain* Trading with the *Spaniards*, exclusive of, and not within the Limits of the Charter of the *South-Sea* Company.

As our Colonies and Plantations are certainly all in some measure very valuable to *Great Britain*, and its Interest to Preserve and Encourage, so I must repeat to you again the Island of *Jamaica* in

a more particular manner, which gives me hopes, whatever may be the design of some Men who are for ruining the Trade with the *Spaniards*, that the necessary regard will be had to its Preservation and Encouragement by the Government.

I am, S I R, Yours, &c.

S I R,

May 5, 1714.

TIS no small Satisfaction to me, that my Letters have given you and others an Idea of the Consequence, and the Advantage the Island of *Jamaica* is to *Great Britain*, not only for its Situation, and the Trade carried on from it with the *Spaniards*; but for its Produce in Sugar, Indigo, &c. and Consumption of the Goods and Merchandizes of and from *Great Britain*, whereby considerable Employment is given to the Navigation of the Kingdom.

And I can't but tell you, that I am pleas'd to find you are of Opinion with me, that the *Assiento* Contract will never Answer; and that carrying on a Trade on the foot of it, as in 42 Articles, will be ruinous to our Trade to the *Indies*, formerly from *Cadiz*, &c. as well as to that from *Jamaica*, and other the *British* Plantations; and I wish with you, that some means could be found out, and enter'd upon, so that the *French* Encrease in their Settlements, especially on *Hispaniola*, might not, as you justly infer from my Letters, endanger *Jamaica*, and occasion its falling (upon a Rupture with *France*) into their Hands, and our Sugar Trade being lost to the Kingdom.

'Tis above eighteen Months that the *Assiento* Contract has been agreed, and Goods have been
shipt

shipt by the *South Sea Company*; and 'tis from the Motions of the Company not unlikely, that the Ships may stay here, before they Sail, as much longer as the Goods have been shipt. Such Delays, in Prosecution of a Trade which has been declared on so many Occasions, and the People made to believe, so very advantageous an one, seems very extraordinary; sure such Delays should not be made, since the former Trade from *Cadiz, &c.* is (as 'tis pretended) to be made good, and much improved and enlarged to *Great Britain*, by one on the foot of *Affiento Contract*, tho' no Ship has been sent, and it may be an Uncertainty when any may; yet that great Quantities of Goods have been bought up by the *South Sea Company*, has refounded all over the Kingdom, and did not a little Service in making People think much better of the Peace with *France* and *Spain* at the late *Elections*, then at present they find any Reason for.

Besides those Particulars, mentioned in my former Letters, of trading on the foot of the *Affiento Contract* being detrimental to the general Interest of *Great Britain*, I am now to take Notice to you that all Letters from *Cadiz, Port St. Mary's, &c.* to our Merchants in *London, Bristol, &c.* give them very Melancholy Accounts of the State and Condition of the Trade there; and in particular, that it is chiefly in the Hands of, and carried on by the *French*, and that the Treaty of Commerce subjects the Trade from *Great Britain* to such Hardships, as were never before known in *Spain*: And from the Island of *Jamaica* 'tis abundantly confirmed by all Letters, that the Trade ever enjoy'd from thence with the *Spaniards* is in a manner lost, four *French* Men of War being stationed upon the Coast of *New Spain*, to prevent and interrupt their Trading. 'Tis given out these Ships are lent the King of

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Spain,

Spain, and act by vertue of *Spanish* Commissions; already they have taken or seized some Trading Vessels belonging to *Jamaica*, to a very considerable Value; therefore be pleased to observe, that while our Trade from *Jamaica* is thus prevented and interrupted, the *French* enjoy and carry on (and by this means more advantagiously) their Trade in the *South Seas*, where, all Letters in *February* and *March* last from *Jamaica* inform the Traders here, that there were Trading above twenty Sail of *French* Ships; and at this time many Ships are fitting out in several Ports of *France* for the same Voyage.

You very well know that I was out of *England* when the Doctor was Condemn'd by the Queen, Lords and Commons, and did not return 'till her Majesty had procured her Subjects a Peace; and therefore had never read the Act, Entitled, *An Act for making good Deficiencies, and satisfying the Publick Credit, and for erecting a Corporation to carry on a Trade to the South Seas; and for the Encouragement of the Fishery; and for Liberty to Trade in unwrought Iron with the Subjects of Spain, and to repeal the Acts for Registering Seamen*, 'till very few Days ago, when I met with the following remarkable Preamble for erecting the *South Sea Company*, viz.

‘ Whereas it is of the greatest Consequence to
 ‘ the Honour and Welfare of this Kingdom, and
 ‘ for the Increase of the Strength and Riches there-
 ‘ of; and for the vending the Product and Manu-
 ‘ facture, Goods and Merchandizes of or brought
 ‘ into this Kingdom, and Employment of the Poor,
 ‘ that a Trade should be carried on to the *South*
 ‘ *Seas*, and other Parts in *America*, within the Li-
 ‘ mits herein after mentioned, which cannot be so
 ‘ securely and successfully begun and carried on, as
 ‘ by a Corporation, with a joint Stock, exclusive
 ‘ of all others. Now for the better Encourage-
 ‘ ment

ment of all and every the Person or Persons, Body Politick or Corporate, who shall be or become Members of the said Company or Corporation, to be erected as aforesaid; and to the end and intent that a Trade to the *South Seas*, and other parts of *America*, within the Limits herein after mentioned, may be carried on and promoted for the Advantage and Honour of this Kingdom; Be it enacted, &c.

The reading of this Preamble immediately brought into my Mind many things in the *Assiento* Contract, and in particular these Words in the 42d Article, viz. 'The said Company shall not carry on, or attempt any unlawful Trade, or other Trade than specified in the said Contract, directly or indirectly, under any Pretence whatsoever; which Words seem calculated to prohibit all other Trade with the *Spaniards* in the *Indies*, and are an effectual Bar to the Settlement and Commerce of the *South Sea* Company into the *South Seas*, from a Trade, whence, as by the recited Preamble, such wonderful Advantages were to accrue to the Kingdom. Thus you see this *expected advantageous Trade* that was to have vended the Manufacture of this Kingdom, and found Employment for the Poor, is entirely given up, and lost to *Great Britain*; and as the Duties laid by the Treaty of Commerce on our Goods and Merchandize (as agreed by all Merchants) will ruin the Trade might have been expected to the Kingdom of *Old Spain*, so it is to be presumed, that the number of *French* Ships Trading to the *South Seas*, will not only occasion the Case of the *South Sea* Company (should they send Goods to *New Spain*, as by the 42d Article they have Liberty) to be much worse than I have represented it; but also, together with the *French* Guard Ships, prevent and wholly put an end to the

Trade with the *Spaniards* from *Jamaica*, which has brought from 200000 *l.* to 250000 *l.* yearly into this Kingdom, as I have before observed.

The present Condition and Circumstance of our Trade formerly enjoyed to *Old* and *New Spain*, deserves seriously to be attended to, and considered by every Man that is a Well-wisher and Lover of his Country; and was every Man to make Enquiry thereinto, he would find the Advantages formerly enjoyed by *England*, in having the Trade to these Kingdoms chiefly to it self, to be (as I have taken Notice to you) mostly enjoy'd by the *French*, and if suffer'd to go on thus, they will engross it wholly to themselves, and soon become Masters of the Product and Trade of *America*. and consequently of that of the greatest part of *Europe*.

This must be the Case, and hardly remediable as things are with us, or since *Spain* and the *Indies* have been left in the Possession of one of the House of *Bourbon*; and a Trade ever valuable to *Great Britain* is ruined, by being thrown (and other of her Majesty's Subjects depriv'd of enjoying it) into the Hands of a Company, who, not to mention the Parties and Divisions among them ever destructive to Trade, tho' so long erected, and so long an *Assiento* Contract given them, have not sent a piece of *British* Manufacture, or a Negro, either into the *South Seas*, or any other part of the *Spanish West Indies*.

I am, S I R, yours, &c.

S I R,

S I R,

May 10. 1714.

HAVING received yours, wherein you desire me to give you the State of the Island of *Jamaica*, with respect to the Soldiers there; and whether there be any occasion for them now in time of Peace, by reason it will be very soon consider'd in your House; in compliance with your Commands, I shall do it as far as I am capable.

Since by my former Letters you are well inform'd of the Consequences and Advantages of that Island to *Great-Britain*, therefore on this Subject I need only say, that these Advantages (abstracting them from other Considerations) do in a great measure depend on the Security of that Island; the Merchants trading thither, and the Factors going to, and residing in it; and that this Security the Soldiers have been to the Island, and are still necessary for the Preservation of it; and in case they should be recall'd, would (in that particular only) very much endanger the Trade and Safety of the Island.

For the Negroes on the Island being upwards of 80000, and the white People not above 2000, may at any time rise and destroy the white People; to prevent which, as well as secure themselves from an Enemy in time of War, or Pyrates in time of Peace, there are constant Guards kept in the Forts, and several parts of the Island, which before the Soldiers came thither were serv'd by the Inhabitants, but was a very great Toil and Fatigue to them, occasion'd the Death of many white People, especially newly come to the Island; and was consequently very prejudicial to the Trade and Business of it. Not to mention that such Guards were nor, nor could be so well serv'd by the *Militia*, as by Regular Forces, especially in those Forts where there were any number of great Guns, &c.

This Danger from the Negroes, and the Necessity there was for having white People in Numbers, the first Settlers or Inhabitants in 1672, were so sensible of, that there was a Law made, to oblige every Master of Negroes to keep a white Man to the first five, and one to every ten afterwards, altho' at that time the white People in the Island were six to one, or more, than what they are at present; and the Negroes not above one third to what they are now; and the Island had no such formidable Neighbour, as I have before shewn the *French* on *Hispaniola* now are.

The Island having extremely decreased in People since the great Earthquake, the Inhabitants, upon the Apprehensions of the former War, humbly desir'd his late Majesty, for the Security of the Island, to send a number of Soldiers thither, which was accordingly granted, and have been in part continued there by her present Majesty.

In Consideration of the Service and Security the Soldiers were to the Island, both from Enemies without, and the Negroes within, and the difference of their living there, and in *Great Britain* or *Ireland*, they have been allow'd an additional Subsistence of 5 s. a Week for a private Soldier, and 20 s. a Week to an Officer, over and above their Pay on the Establishment of *Great-Britain*; which additional Subsistence has been rais'd by a Law, obliging every Master of Negroes to pay a certain Rate for every white Man he had not, in proportion to a certain number of Negroes, according to, or upon the Model of the Law made in 1672, which is not repeal'd, but has been dispens'd with, during the continuance of the Law for an additional Subsistence of the Soldiers.

As this Law varies from the other in the Execution, so the proportion which was a white Man to 10, or to pay a Deficiency for every 10 Negroes,

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was soon rais'd for every thirty, and thus in a great measure became the Decrease of white Men.

I shall not trouble you with the unaccountable and most extraordinary Proceedings of the Assembly of *Jamaica*, you having great part of them before you, further than taking notice, that notwithstanding the Facts aforesaid, the Majority (being actuated by Passion and Prejudice) did, without any regard to the Interest of the Island, refuse and declare against allowing the Soldiers such additional Subsistence, any longer than the first of this Month; and are endeavouring by their Agents or Friends here (tho' no Address of Thanks for them, or Representation of their being a Charge to the Island, nor any Request be made by the Country to the Queen) to get them recall'd: Altho' the Soldiers, which have been at times 700, are now reduced to 300; therefore are not half the Charge to the Island as formerly; And as by the Peace the Produce of the Plantations comes safely to Market, so by being brought cheaper to it, and selling at a greater Price, the Country is much better able to allow them an additional Subsistence than formerly: And in case the Soldiers should be recall'd, considering the present Circumstances of the Island, 'tis to be fear'd the Island would be in Danger, not only from an Invader, but even from the Negroes within; and the Merchants will be discourag'd from sending their Effects thither, and the Factors and Men of Business from going to, or residing in the Island, whereby the Trade will be in a great measure lost, even on this account only.

After what I have said to you on this Head, I shall now, Sir, desire you to consider the following Extracts out of my Lord *Arch. Hamilton*, Governor of *Jamaica's*, Letters to the Lords of Trade

and Plantations, by which you will see his Lordship's Sense on this matter.

In a Letter dated the 10th of *October*, his Lordship writes, ' That the Negroes had lately cut in
' pieces two white Men in open Day, and he cannot but from this Consideration propose the Necessity of continuing some Regular Forces, at least
' for some time after the Peace, or until the Island can reap the Benefit of it by an addition of white
' Men there, or otherwise the Island may be liable to some unlucky Disaster by an Insurrection.

And in the said Letter his Lordship further adds, ' That from what he says, he believes that Board
' will be of Opinion, that they are not altogether fit to be left by themselves; and that at least 300
' Men, which might be independent Companies, and of much less Charge to her Majesty, would
' be necessary in time of Peace to Garrison the Forts, and keep other Guards, to which he attributes
' much of the Quiet this Island has hitherto enjoy'd.

And in another Letter of the 27th of *October*, says further, ' That if any thing like what he had
' the Honour to write to their Lordships, should be resoly'd on, he is perswaded the Country will
' chearfully go into it, notwithstanding the factious Endeavours of a few, who have never been satisfied with any Government.

Having, Sir, in this manner given you the State of the Island in relation to the Soldiers, and confirm'd what I have said, by my Lord *Hamilton's* Letters to the Board of Trade, I do not in the least question, but that from the usual Prudence and Concern for your Country, and whatever depends on it, so visible in all your Actions, you will employ that Interest your distinguishing Qualifications have gain'd in your
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Honourable House, for obtaining the Continuance of the Forces at *Jamaica*; and that they may not be recalled, at least until the Assembly of that Island shall have made a Law for inviting and encouraging of white People to come and reside in it, and for obliging the Planters to keep a white Man for every ten Negroes, or pay a certain Sum weekly deficiency; and the Execution of that Law be in the Government, and not in the Planters, as that made in the Year 1672 was, which rendred it of little or no effect, each Man sparing his Neighbour for his own sake.

Submitting these things to your Consideration,

I am, S I R, yours, &c.

S I R,

May 25, 1714.

I Have perused the Book you sent me, Entitled; *Some Observations shewing the Danger of losing the Trade of the Sugar Colonies*, written, as I take it, by the same Person, that wrote *The present State of the Sugar Plantations*, Dedicated to the Lord Treasurer; which Book concludes thus remarkably; ' it was ' the Extraordinary Genius, and diligent Application of the great Minister *Colbert* to Trade and ' Navigation, that advanc'd the Grandeur of the ' *French* Nation, together with his excellent Regulation of the Finances, more than all the Undertakings of the preceding Ministers of that ' Prince; and yet the *French* were a People very ' little disposed to Trade, therefore the *British* Subjects, who have exceeded all other Nations in ' their Capacity towards Settlements Abroad, cannot fail of making greater Progress in Trade and ' Navigation, and more especially seeing her Majesty

Majesty has at present a Ministry who are remarkable for their Learning, Experience and great Sagacity in Publick Affairs; and that such a Foundation has been already laid for enlarging the Trade and Navigation of this Kingdom, as will, in spite of all Malice, shew the Superior Genius of the Principal Founder thereof. As I am informed what are this Gentleman's Principles as to Government, and his Declarations of the Management of the present Ministry, I am to look upon him as serious in what I have just mentioned, and therefore should be very glad he would but particularize wherein the present Ministry, so remarkable, as he says, for their Learning, Experience, and great Sagacity in Publick Affairs, have laid such a Foundation for enlarging the Trade and Navigation of this Kingdom.

'Tis plain it can't be by erecting a *South Sea* Company for Trading to the *South Seas*, that being at an end by accepting of the *Assiento's* Contract, or a Forfeiture of whatever they may have in *Spain*, should they so Trade; and, without the Acceptance of the said Contract, they could not have been precluded by the Treaty of *Spain*, except confirmed by Act of Parliament, from Trading into the *South Seas*: So by the Act whereby the *South Sea* Company is erected, other her Majesty's Subjects are precluded, which deserves to be duly considered, since the *French* so freely and amply enjoy and carry on a Trade thither.

It can't be by obtaining the *Assiento* Contract for the supplying the *Spaniards* with Negroes, or sending yearly a Ship of 500 Tuns to *Portobello* with Goods to be Sold only at the time of the Fair; since, not to repeat that the *South Sea* Company as *Assientists* will be Losers by the said Contract, and Trading on the foot thereof, there will not thereby be any

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new, or greater supply of Money brought into this Kingdom, than before from the Trade carried on from Jamaica, which this Contract, or Trading on the foot of it, not only puts an end to, but also to that from Cadiz, Port St. Mary's, &c. to the Indies; and besides, not only greatly depopulates, and takes from Jamaica the best Strength and Security of it, its Seafaring Men, but prevents the further Encrease in the Settlement of the Island, which is capable of producing three times what it does at present, as I presume is fully made appear in my former Letters.

It can't be by leaving out in the Articles of Peace concluded at *Utrecht*, the seventh Article of the Preliminary Treaty of *Gertrudenberg*, viz. *That particularly, and especially, France shall never become possessed of the Spanish West Indies, nor send Ships thither to exercise Commerce under any Pretence whatsoever.* Had this Article been in the Treaty at *Utrecht*, there would have wanted no *Assiento* Contract, or other Article for Trade with *Spain*, being hereby the Trade to the *Indies* must inevitably have fallen mostly to *Great Britain*.

It can't be by having the Possession of *Newfoundland*, since the *French* have procur'd a Cession to be made them of the Island of *Cape Breton*, and several Islands in the Gulph of *St. Florence*, and have further obtained Liberty of curing and drying their Fish, setting up Stages, and resorting to our Island of *Newfoundland* during all the time it is of any use to resort thither, that is, during the Fishing Season, whereby they do not only now supply themselves with the Fish they formerly had from us, but furnish many parts of *Spain* and *Italy* therewith, and Rival us there to our prodigious Loss.

It can't be by making a Treaty of Commerce with *France*, that having been rejected, or not
made

made effectual by the last Parliament, as detrimental to the Trade and Manufacture of this Kingdom; and that this Treaty would be so, was it not confirmed by Parliament, will appear to any impartial unprejudic'd Person that shall read a Paper, Entitled, *The British Merchant, or Commerce preserv'd, in answer to the Mercator, or Commerce retriev'd*, and, not to mention the many good Pamphlets on this Subject, that Entitled *the Vindication of the last House of Commons in rejecting the Bill for confirming the 8th and 9th Articles of the Treaty of Navigation and Commerce between England and France*.

It can't be by the Treaty of Commerce with *Spain*, since that Treaty puts the Trade of *Great Britain* to *Spain* under greater Disadvantages than ever before. For it takes from the Factors, or *English* Merchants living there, their Ancient Privilege of a *Judge Conservator*, and Security for Trading; and as all our Merchants that have liv'd in, and been Traders to *Spain* unanimously agree must ruin, or put an end to any Trade that might (as 'tis Peace) have been expected to that Kingdom; but this, and greater Consequences attending *Great Britain* were timely foreseen, and taken Notice of (as is evident by the Letter to a Member of the *October Club*) should *Spain* and the *Indies* be given to, or left in the Possession of any of the House of *Bourbon*.

It can't be by any thing that appears in either of the Treaties of Peace with *France* or *Spain*, to be done, or articulated to prevent the growing Power of the *French* in *America*; 'tis true they have yielded up that part of *St. Christopher*'s taken from them the first Year of the late War, and why not to the *Spaniards* (as was intended by the late Ministry) the share they are in Possession of on *Hispaniola*, which not only will endanger *Jamaica*, but when compleatly settled, the whole Sugar Trade of this Kingdom.

The Consequences of which, in the Words of Colonel Cleland, an Author already quoted, must be attended with the loss of a considerable Trade to these Kingdoms, it may be computed one way or other near two Millions Sterling per Ann. which must bring Ruin to many thousand Families in the Plantations, and many more thousands in these Dominions.

It can't be by having reserved *Port Mahone* and *Gibraltar* in our Possessions; which Places, as they will be a constant Yearly Charge to this Nation, so the Consequences and Advantages arising from them are only in Case of War with *France*, *Spain*, and other Nations, a very precarious Security to our Trade into the *Levant* and *Mediterranean*; and surely it will not be said, the Trade of *Great Britain*, and particularly of *London*, is secured (as in Case of a War with *France* it was believed it would) by having the Harbour of *Dunkirk* demolished, since the Grand Monarch is building an Harbour at *Mardyke*, to serve in the same stead as *Dunkirk* did before.

Upon reading the Paragraph I have given you out of Colonel *Cleland's* Book, these several Particulars occurred to me; and therefore I am at a Loss wherein a Foundation is laid by the present M——y, or their Founder, for enlarging the Trade and Navigation of this Kingdom. I can see nothing like it, by our late Treaties of Peace and Commerce with *France* and *Spain*. Some People aver they are destructive of both; surely this Gentleman can't mean, because I am inform'd the M——y are generally agreed, that an exclusive Trade to *Africa* is most for the Interest of the Plantations, that such is the Foundation laid for enlarging of the Trade and Navigation of this Kingdom. In every Sessions for many Parliaments, it has been resolved that the Trade to *Africa* ought to be free and open to all
ber

ber Majesty's Subjects of Great Britain and the Plantations; but nothing is more clear than the design of these two Pamphlets being to gain an *exclusive Trade* to Africa for the Royal African Company. And as the Author's Apprehensions are, that our Sugar Colonies will be ruined for want of an *exclusive Trade*, by which they may have a constant Supply of Negroes at moderate rates :

Mine, if such an *exclusive Trade* should be granted, would arise partly from thence, but more especially from the growing Power of the *French* in *America*, and the Increase of their Sugar Settlements in these Islands, especially on the Island of *Hispaniola*, an Island, by its Largeness and the Goodness of its Soil, capable when its fully settled (as it certainly will be in a few Years) of producing as much Sugar as all our Colonies, and a much greater quantity of Indigo, Ginger, Cotton, &c.

I am, S I R, yours, &c.

S I R,

IN my former having taken notice of the Danger the Trade and Navigation of *Jamaica* is in from its Neighbours, from its Situation, and the Loss like to attend it from the *Assiento* Contract, or the *South Sea* Company's trading on the Foot thereof, and doing as the *French* do now, *viz.* seizing our Vessels by Vertue of it, and shown the Danger there is, upon a Rupture with *France*, of its falling into the Hands of the *French*; now beg leave to give you an account what some others say thereupon.

The Lord *Arch. Hamilton*, Governor of *Jamaica*, in a Speech to the Assembly since the Peace, tells

tells them, *The inviting and encouraging Artificers and Trades-men, in which the Strength of a Colony so much consists, to come and settle amongst them, did deserve their particular Consideration, especially at this time when the Power of their Neighbours on Hispaniola was already formidable, and like to encrease.* And the Lords of Trade, in a Letter to my Lord Bolinbroke, say, *That as to the Consequence of recalling the Regiment, we take leave to represent, in Concurrence with the Opinion of the Governor, and of the Merchants and Planters here, that Jamaica being in a manner surrounded by Spanish and French Settlements, if no regular Forces there, it may be in Danger from the Attempt of an Enemy, in case of any Rupture hereafter.*

And Col. Cleland in his Book Entituled, *Some Observations shewing the Danger of losing the Trade of the Sugar Colonies*, tells us, *viz.* ‘The French in their Islands, especially in that great Island of Hispaniola, in which they have got a footing, are possess’d of large Countries, and great Tracts of fertile Land, which produce Provisions and most other Necessaries and Conveniences for Life, and likewise Materials and Requisites for Manufacturing Sugar and other the Product of the Island, such as Timber, Cattle, Horses, &c.

‘And on the other hand the *English* Sugar Plantations are upon small Islands, *Barbadoes*, which is but twenty Miles in length, and about twelve Miles over in the broadest part, being the largest of them all excepting *Jamaica*; and even that Island is not well Inhabited, has a great deal of Savanna Land, is very Mountainous, and in a War is very much expos’d; so that if the Windward Islands should come to be deserted or lost, *Jamaica* could never be kept and improv’d so as to support the Sugar Trade of this Kingdom.

Thus

Thus you see I am not singular in my Apprehensions of the Danger the Island *Jamaica* is in, from *Hispaniola*, of falling (upon a Rupture with *France*) into the Hands of the *French*; nor can I be so, as to our Sugar Colonies being ruin'd, or of little Advantage to *Great-Britain*, should a Peace with *France* be lasting, and that from the Encrease of the *French* Settlements on *Hispaniola*. This seems most evidently to determine the Fate of our Sugar Trade, and not the Colonies want of being supply'd on moderate Terms with Negroes, being nothing is more Notorious, than that the Plantations, *since the Trade to Africa being laid open in 1697*, have been better supply'd with Negroes than before.

The Consequences of the *French* growing Power in *America*, and the encrease of their Settlements on *Hispaniola*, especially the Danger thereof to *Jamaica*, and the Sugar Trade, was timely foreseen and taken notice of; and as the King of *France* did become a Suitor to *Great-Britain* for Peace, and acknowledg'd he ow'd his Kingdom to the Suspensions of the *British* Arms, 'tis presum'd might have been prevented, had it been demanded and insisted on at a proper time for the *French* to have restor'd to the *Spaniards* the share they possess'd of the Island of *Hispaniola*.

Thus, Sir, I have given you, according to your several Commands, my Thoughts, in this and my former Letters, of the Consequence and Advantage of the Island of *Jamaica* to *Great-Britain*, as respecting its Situation, its Produce, and the Trade from thence with the *Spaniards*: I have also told you what Sums of Money have been formerly brought into this Kingdom thereby; and have likewise consider'd how sensibly the Improvements or Decay of the Island of *Jamaica*, and its advantage-

ous Trade would affect *Great-Britain*, and shown the manifest Disadvantages both lie at present under (which are still likely to encrease) from several Considerations; *First*, from the small Number of its Inhabitants, whereby it's liable to an Insurrection from within, and Invasions from without. *Secondly*, From the *Assiento's* Contract, which entirely prohibits and destroys that Advantageous Trade from *Jamaica* to the *Spanish West Indies*. Altho', as I presume I have fully prov'd, such Trade on the foot of the *Assiento* Contract will be *detrimental and a loss to the South-Sea Company*; and altho' did not the Treaty of Commerce entirely ruin it, it would be extreamly prejudicial to the Advantageous Trade of this Kingdom, formerly to *Old Spain*, especially *Cadiz, Port St. Maries, &c.*

Thirdly, From the liberty now enjoy'd by the *French* of Trading to the *Spanish West-Indies*, which they never did before one of the House of *Bourbon* came into the Possession of the Throne of *Spain*, which they are engrossing to themselves, taking and seizing our Vessels, that they presume are Trading; this is still confirm'd every Day by very melancholy Letters from *Jamaica*, as particularly in the *Daily Courant* of the 7th Instant, in which you will find this following Paragraph.

' *Jamaica, March 10.* We have in a manner lost
' all our Trade with the *Spaniards*; hardly a good
' Voyage has been made hence to the Coast since
' you left us, and the *Spanish* Ports are too well
' guarded at present, they having now four Ships
' of War, one whereof is the *Hampton-Court*,
' which are stationed at *Cartagena, Porobello, the*
' *Havana*, and *la Vera Cruz*: *Thornton* (who Com-
' manded a *Jamaica* Sloop whose Cargo cost
' above 10000*l.* and had neither Traded nor broke
D ' Bulk

‘ Bulk when taken) was lately made Prize by the
 ‘ *Hampton-Court*, and his Vessel condemn'd at *Car-*
 ‘ *tagena*; and I was inform'd by him since his re-
 ‘ turn hither, that the *French* have now in the
 ‘ *South-Seas* near upon 30 Sail of Ships; so that
 ‘ you may guess what a condition we are like to be
 ‘ in here as to our Trade.’

Lastly, From the growing Power of the *French* in *America*, particularly on *Hispaniola*, which by its Extent and Fertility, the Number and Industry of its Inhabitants, I have shewn to be a dangerous Neighbour to *Jamaica*, and consequently so to our Sugar Colonies, and the Trade and Navigation of *Great-Britain*,

Upon these two Accounts, *First*, That it is so to the Island of *Jamaica* in case of a *Rupture* with *France*, by reason of its great Superiority in People, whereby *Jamaica*, being but thinly Inhabited, will be very liable to, and in great danger of an Invasion from thence, and of falling into the Hands of the *French*.

Secondly, That as by the *French* King's Order (which I omitted before) for the better settling and peopling his Colonies in *America*, *Every Ship or Vessel is oblig'd, when requir'd, to carry a certain number of People thither Freight-free*. So even in time of Peace by the number of their Inhabitants always encreasing, by the said Order, and the Fertility of the Country in producing all Materials and Requisites for the enlarging and improving of their Sugar Works, and the vast extent of *Hispaniola*, they will not only make much greater quantities of Sugar, than we can in our Plantations, but at a cheaper Price, by being better furnish'd with most Materials for the doing thereof within themselves; whereas our Islands, at least some of them,
 are

are oblig'd to be supply'd from other her Majesty's Dominions with those Materials and Requisites, at a greater Expence, and therefore our Product must necessarily be made up at a much dearer Rate than theirs, whereby the Consequence will be, that the *French* will in a little time beat us out of that most valuable Article to the Kingdom, *the Sugar Trade*. And all this is so evident, that other Persons, with *different Views* to my self, induced by the apparent Tendency of these things, could not help making the like Remarks, altho' they would insinuate them to proceed from other Causes meerly chimerical.

If in the course of my several Letters I may seem in some parts of them, to have digress'd from my first Subject, or express'd my self in too warm or free a manner, I hope, Sir, my good Intentions therein are so visibly design'd, either to point out our real Advantages, or expose those *artful Methods*, made use of to darken our true Interest, and thereby advance the Trade and Power of other Nations, that your Candor and sincere Love of, and Knowledge in the Interest of your Country, will pardon any such Expressions from one not studious of speaking or writing agreeably, but with Sincerity, which engages me on all occasions to profess my self,

S I R,

June 12, 1714.

Yours, &c.

D s

S I R,

S I R,

I Have yours, wherein you acquaint me what was said in your House by two Gentlemen in the Commission of Trade, &c. As to the first, ' That the *South-Sea* Company have bought 5 or 600000 *l.* in Goods and Merchandize, and are sending them forthwith to *New-Spain*, and in Nine Months will have upwards of a Million in return as Produce thereof:

In Answer, I have been assured by some Directors of that Company, that the Goods bought by them are not to the value of 300000 *l.* and great part of them not the Manufacture of *Great-Britain*: But admitting there be bought to the value the Gentleman alledged in your House, I want to have it explain'd by him, how a Return shall come to *Great-Britain* in such time as upward of a Million.

You know that the *South-Sea* Company Ship'd Goods, &c. on two of the Queen's Ships above eighteen Months ago, which Ships are still in the River: And as it is very uncertain when they will Sail, so 'tis stipulated in the *Assiento* Contract, ' That the Company shall not sell the Goods and Merchandizes, but only at the time of the Fair; and if arrive before the Flota's and Galleons, the Factors of the Company shall be obliged to land the Goods and Merchandizes, and put them into Warehouses that shall be locked with two Keys, One of which to remain with the Royal Officers, and the other with the Factors of the Company, to the end the said Goods and Merchandizes may be sold, during the continuance of the Fair only.

Now

Now, Sir, considering that a Fair is generally but once in three Years, and sometimes longer, together with the Climate the Goods are sent to, and the Uncertainty of selling them the time the Fair lasts, I humbly conceive you will be of Opinion with me, that the *South Sea Company* will never have their first Cost in return for the Goods and Merchandizes they shall send to the *Spanish West Indies*.

This will infallibly be their Case, especially as they can sell but only during the time of the Fair, and the *French* carry on and enjoy so considerable a Trade into the *South Seas* directly.

As to the other, ' That the *Spaniards* must take
' 4800 Negroes, and the Company may carry 10000
' or more yearly, and can't fail of selling them at
' 40*l.* a head.

I answer, Tho' it may be allowed the *Spaniards* will ever want some Negroes, yet they are not obliged by the *Assiento Contract* to take from the *South Sea Company*, or *Assentists*, 4800 yearly; but the Company, or *Assentists*, are obliged to pay the Duties of $33\frac{1}{3}$ Pieces of Eight for 4000 Negroes yearly at *Madrid*, commencing from the 25th of *March* 1712-13, besides advancing King *Philip* 200000 Pieces of Eight, and his share for carrying on a Trade, which there is no other way provided to be repaid, than out of the Profits arising thereby.

'Tis very true, as said by this Gentleman, that the *South Sea Company* may carry 10000 Negroes, or more, yearly to the *Spanish West Indies*; but far from certain, the *Spaniards* will take them off at 40*l.* a head; nay, it is not certain they will the number of 4000, which the Company are obliged, by Acceptance of the *Assiento Contract*, to pay Duties yearly for at *Madrid*.

I will presume to say, that should the Company not exceed sending 4800 Negroes yearly, they will not sell at 40 *l.* a Head: The Duties deducted reduces it under 32 *l.* and should they send the Number of 10000 yearly, it would be very extraordinary if they sold them for the Duties and Charge of Transportation from *Africa*.

Our Traders who have had no Duties to pay, have not for many Years sold their Negroes among the *Spaniards* for above 120 to 140 Pieces of Eight, or 30 to 35 *l.* a Head, tho' only Men and Women, and two Men to a Woman: Generally a Cargo so there were Boys and Girls amongst them, have not come out more than 110 Pieces of Eight, or 27 *l.* 10 *s.* *Spanish* Mony.

If I am not misinformed, the Company have agreed to give 10 *l.* a head Sterling, so many Men so many, and so many Boys and Girls in such a number. On the Coast of *Africa* the Freight from thence 6 *l.* 10 *s.* and 7 *l.* and the Duties above 8 *l.* after mention of these Articles, there is no occasion to shew it must be a losing Trade, by observing the Number of Negroes may be allowed to die from the time are taken aboard on the Coast of *Africa*, to the time arrive at *New Spain*, and from after their Arrival there, and the 15 Days the Company are obliged to pay Duties for them, 'till they are or may be Sold.

I could wish Gentlemen who are carried away with a Notion of Advantages accruing to this Kingdom by the *Assiento* Contract, and the *Souzb Sea* Company's intended Trade on the foot thereof, would but read the *Assiento* Contract it self, and acquaint themselves with the Nature of this Trade, and then they will perceive that Trading on the foot of this Contract would be a losing Trade to
the

the Company, and an uncertain and precarious one to this Kingdom; and moreover, that the Trade carried on from *Jamaica*, not to mention that formerly from *Cadix*, &c. to the *Spanish West Indies*, has been more for the Advantage of *Great Britain* than this Trade can be, which is pretended to be carried on by the *South Sea Company*.

I am much obliged to you for acquainting me what the Amount of the *South Sea* Stock appeared to the House, and am pleased not only that it is not so much by some hundred Thousands as Interest has been hitherto provided for by Parliament, but that by means thereof, and of the Interest of the Nations Stock in the *South Sea Company* (which the Company have till lately retained in their Hands) you have so much less Money to provide this Session for Interest of a Debt has been given out, and greedily swallowed by some People, to have been paid without any Charge to the Kingdom.

I am not surpris'd that such a Sum of Money of the Government's should be permitted to lie in the Hands of the *South Sea Company*, when I reflect without it they could not have bought Goods, and pray what would then some Men have had to say at their late Elections; but the having such Money permitted to remain in their Hands, has brought the Company into a Secret, the Goods, &c. being in great part damaged and spoiled by lying so long already aboard, and the Nation has been put thereby to the Expence of upwards 100000*l.* in providing and keeping in pay the Men of War appointed for their Service. I hope what I have said will satisfy those Gentlemen, for whose use you require me to write this Letter, that there is no possibility of a Million of Money

being brought into the Kingdom by the *South Sea* Company in nine Months, or that the number of Negroes will be taken off by the *Spaniards*, as has been suggested by the honourable Gentlemen you mention.

I am, &c.

P O S T S C R I P T.

SOME Mention being made in the foregoing Letters, that the Danger of losing our Sugar Trade cannot proceed from the want of the Plantations being supplied with a number of Negroes at moderate Prices, 'tis necessary to observe, for the Confirmation thereof:

That the Dispute between the *Royal African* Company and Separate Traders to *Africa*, having been referred some time since to the Consideration of the Lord's Commissioners of Trade, &c. their Lordships after long and mature Examination, determined the Issue of their Report on the Encrease of the Trade, since its being laid open, compared with the Company's Account thereof when they were exclusive; whereby it appeared,

That the *African* Company under an Exclusive Trade in time of Peace between 1680 and 1688, employ'd 259 Ships, being 28 Ships *per Ann.*

And delivered into the Plantations 46396 Negroes, being 5155 *per Ann.*

Which being compared with the Accounts sent to the Lords Commissioners of Trade from the respective Governors of *Jamaica*, *Barbadoes* and *Antego*,

rego, of the Imports of Negroes into those Islands since the Trade was laid open.

It appeared, that the Negroes imported into those Islands only amounted to 42000 for three Years of Peace, between 1700 to 1702, so that there were near as many Negroes delivered into those three Colonies only in three Years of Peace under an open Trade, as there were in nine Years of Peace by the Company into all the Plantations when exclusive.

To which the number of Ships, and Exports of Goods bore an equal Proportion: So that the laying open this Trade was at least 300000 *l. per Ann.* benefit to the Nation.

But which is a Demonstration of this Fact is, that there are now employed 100 and odd Ships capable of carrying 25000 Negroes a Year into the Plantations belonging to the Separate Traders; whereby it appears, that the Trade is now, even at the end of a long War, near four or five times more encreased than when 'twas exclusive in time of Peace.

Since the laying open the *African* Trade, the Export of the Manufacture of course Perfects to that Coast hath been increased from 3900 *per Ann.* to 70000 Pieces *per Ann.*

The *African* Company who have been seven Years soliciting the Parliament for an Exclusive Trade, own very ingeniously they would Export but a small Quantity in comparison of what is Exported now, because (say they) we will make the Natives give as much for half the Quantity as the whole.

But then what must become of half the Gentlemen's Wool, and the Poor Manufacturers of all sorts.

The

The Question in this particular (besides the Natives going to buy of other Nations) is only whether 'tis best for the Woollen Manufacture, that 3900 Percepts be Sold at two Ackys or Crowns each Piece, as was by the Exclusive Company in 1686, or that 70000 Pieces of Percepts a Year be Sold in an open Trade, as 'tis now, at 6 Ackys or Crowns each Piece; the one amounting to 9750 *per Ann.* the other to 105000 *per Ann.* by the difference whereof the Nation gains 95000 *per Ann.*

And whereas it has been said in Print, and otherwise, that the Separate Traders have not paid the *African* Company above one *per Cent.* on the Goods they have Exported to *Africa*; 'tis also necessary to observe,

That the Duties of 10 *per Cent.* received by the *African* Company of the Separate Traders has amounted to 90000 *l.* and therefore if the Separate Traders have paid but 1 *per Cent.* on their Exports to *Africa*, they must have Exported thither during the time (or 13 Years) the Duty of 10 *per Cent.* was payable, to the Value of nine Millions of Money Sterling.

This deserves Consideration, as that there are now more Ships in the Trade from *London* and the Outports than ever; and that when the choice Negroes sold for 14 *l.* to 18 *l.* a head, Sugar did not sell in the Plantations for half the Price it has done for many Years past, or since the Trade to *Africa* has been laid open to all her Majesty's Subjects.

The *African* Company's Settlements, as others, are on a small part of the Coast, and the Trade in general no ways dependant upon them; so that the *Turkey* Company have the same reason to claim the Property of all the Lands of the Grand Signior, because they have Factory Houses in *Turkey*, as the
African

African Company have to those of the Princes in *Africa*, to whom they pay Rent for the Ground where their Factories stand: If the Company had a Property to the sole Trade to *Africa*, why do all other Nations Trade to the same Places, as well where their Factories are, as where they are not.

It being said that Negroes cost upon the Coast of *Africa* 20*l.* to 24*l.* a Head, 'tis not be omitted, that the *African* Company have contracted to deliver the *South Sea* Company at 10*l.* as that the Separate Trade buy them much under 10*l.* on the Gold Coast and *Widab*, and at other Parts of the Coast from 50*s.* to 4*l.* a head, which they are ready to shew Vouchers for at all Times in a proper Place.

'Tis presum'd the foregoing Observations make it demonstrable, that the Loss of our Sugar Trade cannot proceed from the want of the Plantations being duly supplied with Negroes; but entirely the Causes already assign'd, *viz.* the Encrease of the *French* Settlements, and Power in the Island in *America*, especially on *Hispaniola*.

JUST as the Proofs of the last Letters were brought me, I had put into my Hands the *Mercators* for some Days past, which I but cursorily looked over, and should have been extremely surpris'd to find the Author in so Publick a manner shewing himself an Advocate for *Spain*, had not he been so for *France*: None but an Hireling for *France* would so scandalously have abused, not only her Majesty's distant Subjects, but the Inhabitants of a Country from whose Labour and Industry

stry such Riches have accrued, and been brought of late Years to this Kingdom.

None but this Wretch would have set Pen to Paper in the Service of his Masters for the Destruction of such an Island, and of a Trade from thence with the *Spaniards*, that has been of infinitely more Advantage to this Nation, than any Projects of erecting a *South Sea Company*, and an *Assiento Contract*.

I do not trouble my self whether the Letter reprinted from the *Flying Post* in *Mercator* 169, which he is so Angry with, be Genuine or not, I assure him those herein before incerted from *Jamaica* are so, and ready to be produced in a proper place, with many more to confirm them.

But because the Writer of that Letter hath said, *viz.* ‘ to what a low Ebb must *Jamaica* be brought ‘ if her Majesty don’t speedily give us leave to use ‘ Reprisals; Instead of denying any of the Facts in the Letter, how arrogantly does the *Mercator* insult, although from the wording of the Letters, this may seem upon first view to be said of the *Spaniards*, yet I believe ’tis evident the Writer of the said Letter’s meaning was, that her Majesty would give them leave to make Reprisals on the *French*, who siezed *Thornton* mentioned in that Letter, as all Letters from *Jamaica* confirm, and particularly as by part of a Letter from thence, inserted in the *Daily Courant* the 7th Instant appears, for therein ’tis expressly said, ‘ That *Thornton* was lately made ‘ Prize by the *Hampton-Court*, one of the four ‘ *French Men* of War stationed to interrupt our ‘ Trade from *Jamaica*.

The *Mercator* in No. 170. would have had his Readers believe the *French* have left off Trading with *New Spain*, or into the *South Seas* directly,
for

for says he, ' I am not ignorant what these Men
' suggest, that the *Spaniards* admit the *French* to
' Trade with them now, at the same time we are
' excluded; but they beg this Question with a
' Witness till they prove it, and till they can give
' us an Account of one *French* Ship arrived there
' since the Peace; what might be before the War
' was quite another Case, and not at all to the
' purpose.' But that to say the *French* now send
Ships and Trade to *New Spain*, is not begging
the Question, appears by the following Paragraph
of a Letter from *Cadix* dated the 10th of *June* 1714,
in the *Daily Courant* of this Day.

' Here is a *French* Ship loading for the *Spanish*
' *West Indies*, 'tis kept a Secret where she is bound,
' but supposed by her Cargo, which will be rich,
' for the *Vera Cruz*: Another sailed from hence a-
' bout three Weeks ago; these do not go as *Spani-*
' *ards* but as what they are, so they are not fa-
' tisfied with driving the Trade from *France*, but
' do it likewise from hence, whilst the *Spanish* Mer-
' chants are in a manner excluded by the seldom
' going of any of their Fleets: And besides from
the Extract of Letters from *Jamaica* already men-
tioned, which Letters, and many others from
thence, together with some late ones from *France*,
of several Ships being now fitting out at *St. Malo's*,
&c. for the *South Seas*, are ready to be produced at
all times in a proper Place.

I will so far agree with the *Mercator*, that our
Trade from *Jamaica* with the *Spaniards* is a Collusive
one, or contrary to the Laws, Customs, &c. of *Spain*,
as well as that with us. All other Nations trading
to our Colonies and Plantations, are seizable and
liable to a Forfeiture: But I would desire him, as
he has allowed this Trade to be a valuable one to
the

the Kingdom, to make a distinction between our Traders being taken or seized by the *Spaniards*, according to their Laws, Customs, &c. and by the *French* with their Ships of War as Prize, or by our Governments depriving the Subjects of *Great-Britain* of that beneficial Trade, which from the *Spaniards*, whom it chiefly concerns, we should be in no Danger of.

I have in part touched upon this in my third Letter, and refer my Reader thither, with putting these Questions,

Whether any Stipulation in a Treaty, the Article whereof not particularly confirmed by Act of Parliament; can restrain the Subject from any Right or Liberty, which otherwise he might lawfully claim or enjoy, or put him under any Penalties or Incapacities which the Laws of his Country have not done?

Whether 'tis the Interest of *Great-Britain*, to deprive its Subjects of those Advantages they have or might enjoy, in Complacence to the Interest of any foreign Nation, by adding Force and Execution to their Laws, Customs, &c. against our own People, which would probably otherwise be dispens'd with by, or prove ineffectual from that Nation whom it wholly concerns?

The foregoing Reflections, upon the first reading these Papers, immediately occurred to me, and I can truly say, I heartily forgive the *Mercator* those *familiar* Names he bestows upon the Inhabitants of *Jamaica*, for the following Paragraphs in them.

‘ All Men know, that the Trade to *Jamaica*,
 ‘ would be of very small Moment to *England*, in
 ‘ comparison to what it now is, if their clandestine
 ‘ Trade with *New Spain* were taken away.

‘ They

‘ They own what is noted above, that take away
 ‘ their Clandeskine and Pyratival Trade, and the
 ‘ Island of *Jamaica* will be reduced to a very low
 ‘ Ebb, which is indeed very true, compared to
 ‘ that flourishing Trade which they carry on now;
 ‘ for *Jamaica*, as a Plantation, altho’ it be a very
 ‘ good Colony, yet is not able to carry on one
 ‘ twentieth part of the Trade which is now driven
 ‘ there. We know very well what are the Pro-
 ‘ ductions of that Island, such as Cotton, Indico,
 ‘ Cocoa, Pimento, &c. and the Quantity and Va-
 ‘ lue we bring from thence is easily known. But
 ‘ what is all this to the Gold and Silver which is
 ‘ return’d from thence to *Britain*, and particu-
 ‘ larly to the other of our *West India* or *American*
 ‘ Colonies, who are all supplied with their Cur-
 ‘ rent Coin and Plate from this one Island? And
 ‘ what numbers of People are maintain’d at *Ja-*
 ‘ *maica*, more than as a meer Plantation, would
 ‘ ever find Business there, who are all employ’d in
 ‘ the Trading with or Plundering and Robbing the
 ‘ *Spaniards*, even in the time of the profoundest
 ‘ Peace? Have not some Hundred thousand Pounds
 ‘ in Value in our Woollen Manufactures, and other
 ‘ Goods, been sent yearly from *England* to *Ja-*
 ‘ *maica*, more than they could any way dispose of,
 ‘ but for this Pyratival Peace-breaking Trade.

‘ It may be well said by the Writers of the
 ‘ Letter from *Jamaica*, that if their liberty of
 ‘ trading Clandestinely is taken from them, their
 ‘ Trade will be reduced to a very low Ebb; for
 ‘ indeed fifteen Parts of twenty, nay some say, nine-
 ‘ teen Parts of twenty, of all the Trade of *Jamaica*,
 ‘ is their clandestine Trade with *Spain*, and such
 ‘ other Trades as depend thereon.

‘ First

' First it is certain, that this secret Trade to *Spain*
 ' is the real and only Occasion of the great Con-
 ' course of People, that is, of *Europeans*, to the
 ' Island of *Jamaica*: This by consequence, is the
 ' Occasion of such an unusual Trade thither for
 ' Provisions, as well from *England* as *Ireland*, and
 ' all the *British* Colonies on the Continent of *Ams-*
 ' *rica*.

' Were the Commerce of *Jamaica* only such as
 ' would depend upon the Plantation of the Colony
 ' only, the Number of Inhabitants especially at the
 ' Sea-Ports of that Island would be very few, com-
 ' pared to what now are to be found there: It
 ' need not be enlarged upon, that a great part of
 ' the Commerce from *Ireland*, *Maderas*, *New En-*
 ' *gland*, *New York*, *Fersey*, *Pensylvania*, *Virginia*,
 ' and *Carolina*, to *Jamaica*, is for Provisions, be-
 ' sides the large quantity which is carried from
 ' *London* and *Bristol*. Were the Colony of *Ja-*
 ' *maica* to maintain no People but its own Plan-
 ' ters, and a Proportion of Tradesmen to them, as
 ' other Islands do, the demand of Provisions,
 ' especially of Wine and Beer, Corn and Salted
 ' Fish, would be trifling, compared to what it
 ' now is.

' But the fitting out such Numbers of Ships,
 ' Sloops, &c. upon the private Trade, &c. and
 ' the concurrence of Inhabitants, Merchants, Sea-
 ' men, &c. to that Hell upon Earth, that worse
 ' than *Sodom*, the City or Port near the Point at
 ' *Jamaica*, draws such a Multitude of People thi-
 ' ther, and demands such prodigious Quantities of
 ' Provisions of all sorts, but especially as above,
 ' that this Trade alone to *Jamaica* equals if not
 ' exceeds that of all our other Islands put together
 ' even in their most flourishing State.

‘ From

' From this pass, come we to the great Quantity
 ' of *English* Woollen Manufactures which are con-
 ' tinually carried to *Jamaica*, more perhaps than
 ' are sent of that Kind to all the Colonies the *Br-*
 ' *tish* Nation possesses in *America*. Where do this
 ' People pretend they are consum'd? Are the Peo-
 ' ple, the Inhabitants of *Jamaica*, able to con-
 ' sume 4 or 500000*l.* a Year in Linen and Wool-
 ' len Manufactures, or would the meer Planters of
 ' *Jamaica* do so if there were no more People
 ' there than would be as a Plantation?

' The Question needs not to be offered, the *Ja-*
 ' *maica* Merchants know very well what Trade
 ' they ship those Goods for, and that they are not
 ' for the Consumption of *Jamaica*, but for the *Spa-*
 ' *nish West-Indies*; that they are all for a Clandestine
 ' private Trade on the Coast of *Carthagena*, *St. Mar-*
 ' *tha*, the Bay of *Honduras*, &c.

After what I have quoted, I believe the great
 Advantages gained to us by our Trade to *Ja-*
maica, is so apparent, that could I have seen it
 sooner, I might have spared a great many other
 Arguments and Proofs; for you see this Author
 has gone beyond me in almost every Particular
 of it; tho' (according to his Custom) he infers
 from those Advantages we receive, a greater Ne-
 cessity to destroy it: But since his Manner and
 Interest in Writing is generally known, and has
 been evidently designed for mis-representing and
 ruining our Trade in all its Parts; 'tis not extra-
 ordinary to see him wrest the most contrary Con-
 clusions from the clearest Facts: That he has done
 so here, I shall not say, but leave it to every Per-
 son to judge for himself, and only conclude with
 observing, that what is advanc'd by one with ill
 Views, may sometimes serve to set the Truth in a
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fuller and clearer Light, and contrary to the Intentions of the Author, illustrate that which was intended to be darkned, and in the end only expose his own villainous Designs, and make him odious to all Men of true Probity and Virtue.

June 30, 1714.

F I N I S.

ERRATA.

PAG, 10. lin. 2. for from read in. p. 12. l. 2. for Trade read
Mony. p. 22. l. 15. for former read late. p. 30. l. 13. for
these read their. p. 38. l. 18. read (after many) Women.